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TURKMENISTAN

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Cheese Producer Expands Business

**Company manager
boosts his business after
a U.S. study tour.**



Serdar Chovdurbayev demonstrates his products. Photo: ACCELS

“Meetings with U.S. businessmen have considerably changed my worldview,” says Serdar Chovdurbayev. “In the United States, I was able to generate a lot of new ideas which have directly contributed to an improvement in our company’s activities.”

A 3-week USAID-sponsored training in the United States enabled Serdar Chovdurbayev to transform his business into one of the leading cheese and dairy production companies in Turkmenistan. His family-run company Peynerchi has carved out a sizable chunk of the Turkmenistan cheese market, largely dominated by imported cheeses from Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Chovdurbayev, the company’s sales manager, participated in the USAID Community Connections study tour on small business development in 2006. Along with eight other small business owners Chovdurbayev traveled to Detroit, Michigan to familiarize with innovative techniques in advertising and marketing, discuss business strategies with American entrepreneurs, and learn how to develop and implement successful long-term business plans.

Since his return from the U.S., Chovdurbayev focused on marketing to ensure that his company is known throughout the country. The company designed an easily recognizable brand name Yayla and packaging for its cheese, and launched a series of successful advertising campaigns. Yayla cheese soon began outpacing its nearest competitors, increased its market share, and became known throughout the country for its quality and affordable price.

Due to its growing success, the Peynerchi company opened an additional facility in a new region of the country, which led to further 50% growth in production. The company has purchased new equipment and started building new facilities.

Serdar Chovdurbayev is very grateful for the opportunity to learn new skills in the United States. “Meetings with U.S. businessmen have considerably changed my worldview,” he says. “In the United States, I was able to generate a lot of new ideas which have directly contributed to an improvement in our company’s activities.”

Serdar Chovdurbayev is also trying to continue on the learning path started in the U.S. so that his business keeps staying ahead of the competition. He has participated in numerous professional development trainings, and has recently began collaborating with the newly established Union of Entrepreneurs and Manufacturers of Turkmenistan to promote a more favorable climate for business development in the country. He quietly plans that one day in the near future, his company will break into new markets in the New Independent States and the United Arab Emirates.